



State of Connecticut

SENATE

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

SENATOR ART LINARES
THIRTY-THIRD DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 3400
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591
Capitol: (800) 842-1421
E-mail: Art.Linares@cga.ct.gov
Website: www.SenatorLinares.com

MINORITY CAUCUS WHIP

RANKING MEMBER
BANKS COMMITTEE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

MEMBER
COMMERCE COMMITTEE
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Sen. Meyer, Rep. Gentile, Sen. Maynard, Rep. Gentile and members of the Environment Committee,

I am Sen. Art Linares, and I am testifying in support of H.B. 5415: ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL.***

The Air Line Trail State Park currently runs 23 miles eastward from East Hampton to Willimantic.

It's a hiking and biking trail atop the old Air Line Railroad – the former passenger and freight line that sliced diagonally across the state.

Portland officials are working to develop their stretch of the trail to link to neighboring East Hampton.

East Hampton recently celebrated the completion of a 500-foot trail extension, bringing the hiking trail to the downtown. The extension allows hikers to access the trail from Main Street, where a path leads up to a wooden footbridge spanning Pocotopaug Creek.

As you know, I represent Portland and East Hampton, as well as several other towns in the Connecticut River Valley. We are proud of our region's natural scenic beauty. It is why many young professionals – people like me – choose to stay and live here after we graduate from college.

Like many young professionals who choose to live and work here, I enjoy running and hiking and cycling. I am asking you to view the Airline Trail as a key asset to our region and our state.

Our common goal should be to do all we can to maximize the Airline Trail's recreational purposes.

Preserving the Air Line Trail for ecological importance and recreational use connections will improve our quality of life and preserve our region's wonderful natural character.